At the Country Club.

By TEMPLE BAILEY.

The four women were drinking tea. Somewhere out in the October afternoon were four men who made up the friendly octet, but the women, on account of the coolness of the day and the charm of the big fireplace, had elected to stay away from the links.

Three of the women were not young, although the signs of age had been modified by careful grooming and diligent massage. Mrs. Amesbury even looked young with her slender figure, her shining hair and her grace of gesture and of carriage.

But Tressie Stuart was young, and therein lay the difference that made Mrs. Amesbury uneasy. One might give the lie to age by attention to complexion and costume, but there was a quality in Tressie's laugh, a light in her eyes, a buoyancy of spirit, that separated her from the other women and cast the blight of contrast upon their beauty.

"Tressie," Mrs. Amesbury said, "stop roaming around the room. You make me nervous."

"Oh, do I?" Tressie's apology was immediate. "It's something in the air, I think. These fall days make me feel like a young colt. I want to be out of doors and here we are drinking tea by the fire, like a lot of old tabby cats."

"We are a lot of old tabby cats," Miss Angela Amesbury agreed cheerfully. Unlike her sister-in-law, she did not aspire to youthfulness. Having steered herself safely out of a somewhat emotional girlhood into a calm old maidism, she was prepared to claim all middle aged privileges, and tea drinking at the Country club was an indulgence that appealed to her comfortable soul.

"You are the only kitten in the crowd, Tressie," she went on. "Run on out and meet the men. They must be coming in by this time."

"Angela," Mrs. Amesbury reproved her, "Tressie can't go without a chaperon."

"Why not?" Angela asked bluntly. "Two of the men are her uncles, the third is your husband, and she has known Junior Mason since she was a baby."

"Oh, well"—Mrs. Amesbury shrugged her shoulders—"you know we don't think alike on such matters."

"No, thank goodness," said Miss Angela. And then the hitherto silent Aunt Georgia Stuart, who was officially Tressie's chaperon, interposed, "Tressie always does as she pleases, Mrs. Amesbury." And Mrs. Amesbury, with another shrug of her shoulders, gave up the argument and poured herself a second cup of tea.

And so it happened that as Junior Mason came up the elm walk toward the Country club, with the dull orange of the sunset behind him, he saw hurrying to meet him Tressie Stuart in scarlet coat and stiff brimmed hat.

"I should have died if I had stayed in there another minute," she told him. "Can't we walk somewhere before dark comes? This air is like wine."

"It's awfully muddy," he stated dubiously, "in this path under the trees. The other men are coming around by the road, but this was the shorter way, and I wanted to get a few minutes with you before the whole crowd began to piffle paffle."

"Don't be slangy," Tressie admonished.

"Well, you wouldn't call their small talk conversation, would you? It's piffle paffle, and Mrs. Amesbury is the worst of the lot."

"I am ashamed of you," Tressie scolded, "to criticise your elders."

"Mrs. Amesbury wouldn't thank you for calling her anybody's elder. She considers herself the leading juvenile of the Country club. That's why she's jealous of you."

Tressie stared at him.

"Junior," she said severely, "I didn't know you could be so critical of a woman."

He had the grace to look uncomfortable.

"She's made me so unhappy about you, Tressie," he blurted out at length.

"About me?"

"Yes, when you were away all summer and didn't write to me once."

Tressie's eyes were on the sunset.

"No, I didn't write," she said after a pause.

"Why not?"

"Mrs. Amesbury said—that there was another girl, Junior."

"What?"

"Yes. She said you were paying devoted attention to a little Kentucky singer."

"Oh!" Junior flung up his head. "And she told me you were going to marry old General Barnes."

"Who told you?" Tressie demanded.

"Mrs. Amesbury."

"Well, of all things!" Tressie's cheeks were flaming. "And you believed her, Junior?"

"Well, you believed about the Kentucky girl."

For a moment accusing brown eyes met accusing blue ones, and then they both laughed, the joyous laugh of youth that has come into its own again.

"She is good at—fiction," Tressie summed up. "She ought to be punished, Junior."

"Oh, let her go," Junior asserted. "and we will go for a walk, Tressie, and I will tell you all the things I have wanted to write and didn't dare."

But she would not go.

"It is getting too dark," she said. "and even if I have known you all my life, Junior, we must have some regard for conventions."

"Then let us slip in through the French windows and sit in the curtained alcove. They won't see us come in, and we can talk until dinner time."

The alcove was opposite the fireplace and gave a full view of the three women at the low wicker tea table. Mrs. Amesbury was prattling gayly.

"You see, dear Junior's money is a great temptation to the girls. Now, even Tressie"—

Tressie in concealment gasped, and there was wrath in her eyes.

"Don't mind her," Junior whispered. "I know you love me for myself."

Tressie whirled around on him.

"Who told you that I cared?" she demanded. "You are taking a great deal for granted, Junior."

"Please can't I take it for granted?" he urged. "I am going to propose to you right now, Tressie, or Mrs. Amesbury will never give me another chance."

They came out of their dream of happiness some time later to hear Angela protesting.

"But you wouldn't tie such beautiful girlishness as Tressie's to that worn-out old General Barnes?"

"He is very rich," Mrs. Amesbury evaded.

"I think Tressie will marry Junior Mason," Aunt Georgia said placidly. "They are great friends."

Mrs. Amesbury shook her head pityingly.

"Junior likes so many girls. Now, there was that little girl from Kentucky"—

Behind the curtains Junior growled "Piffle paffle," but Tressie put her fingers over his lips, and he kissed the fingers and smiled at her.

"Junior Mason is in love with Tressie," Miss Angela stated, "and you know it, Marion. You had better let him marry her, and then she will be out of the running."

Mrs. Amesbury stared at her sister-in-law haughtily. "I don't know what you mean, Angela," she said.

"Yes, you do." Miss Angela did not mince words. "You know you had always been the belle of the Country club until Tressie Stuart came, and you don't like to abdicate to youth and beauty."

Mrs. Amesbury straightened up in her chair and glared at the sear Miss Angela.

"You are insufferable, Angela," she began, and then, as the three missing men appeared in the doorway, she swept toward them. "We were just talking," she misstated sweetly, "of what we should have for dinner. Oysters and canvasbacks, don't you think, with orange salad and anything else you may suggest?"

Behind the curtains Tressie and Junior were arguing.

"I am going to announce it at once," Junior insisted.

"But"— Tressie began.

"There are no 'buts,'" Junior stated firmly, "and there are a dozen reasons why I should tell them that we are engaged."

And just then Mrs. Amesbury discovered them.

"Why, Tressie Stuart!" she cried as she opened the curtains. "How long have you been here?"

"Oh, a half hour," Tressie considered. "Haven't we, Junior?"

"Long enough for me to propose to Tressie," Junior said, making the astounding statement calmly.

"And she has said 'Yes,'" Junior went on. "I know you will congratulate us, Mrs. Amesbury."

And then with a last fling Mrs. Amesbury gave it up.

"My dear," she said bitingly as she kissed the reluctant Tressie, "who would have dreamed that it was poor little you that Junior really cared for?"

The Ermine.

Across the stream a little above the bank a beautiful white creature was running rapidly about among the stones. It would often vanish for a time, then come into view again at some distance from the hole into which it had disappeared. Ever on the move, peering and sniffing here, there and everywhere, it would have been almost invisible on the snow in its coat of pure white were it not for the jet black tip on its tail and the flashing deep brown eyes and inquisitive nose.

This graceful, active little creature was the ermine, with whose white fur we are all familiar and which in many countries is used for the royal robes of kings and queens to be worn at coronations and on other very special occasions. It is also used in some countries for the trimming of the cloaks of judges which they wear when sitting in court, and there is a saying that when a man is made a judge he "dons the ermine." In the olden days the fur of the ermine was symbolic of purity. In this country the pretty white fur made up with the black tips of the tails placed at regular intervals is very popular.—Charles Livingston Bull in Metropolitan Magazine.

Historic Wedding Ring.

After the great battle of Edgehill, fought when Charles I. was king of England, it was noticed that one of his bravest officers, an ancestor of the present Verney family, was missing. Search was made for the gallant soldier. Nothing was found but the gloved hand, still clutching the royal standard, and the wedding ring which he always wore still encircled the finger. The ornament was worn outside the gloved hand. With this historic relic the Verney family of Clayton, Buckinghamshire, England, have solemnized all their marriages, the ordinary gold band always being substituted after the ceremony. One marriage in which this wonderful ring was in use was that of Sir Henry Verney to the sister of Florence Nightingale.

FASHION JOTTINGS.

One of the Newest Fur Coats of the Season—The Modish Collar.

Women who like to look at novelties even when they cannot buy those things have been struck recently in a fashionable fur shop by a coat of sealskin and heavy gold filet net. The coat is short and loose and is inset with filet net. On that is embroidered a heavy raised design in shaded brown chenille and brown velvet matching

A SMART BOLERO.

A pattern of this smart bolero jacket may be had in six sizes—32 to 48 inches bust measure. Send 10 cents to this office, giving number of pattern (3139) and bust measure, and it will be promptly forwarded to you by mail.

the sealskin in tone. Large pendent ornaments of brown velvet, chenille and gold are set on the fronts and the sleeves. Doubtless such jackets will be craved by many beauties, but the price will prevent these little garments of gold and fur from becoming common this season.

The fashionable collar is fitted close to the neck and is very high at the back and sides, curving to a comfortable line under the chin.

The fur storm collar is here again. It is not so high as it used to be, but high enough to suit women who suffer from drafts on the back of their necks.

Even women who have themselves pictured by expensive artists are wearing low cut gowns for the sittings. The great Sargent under fashion insistence has been obliged to put a scarf about the shoulders of his models.

Among the fashionable jewelry of moderate price lapis lazuli, jade, cameos cut from shell or coral, Venetian beads and the old time jet are all back. Antique patterns in brooches, bracelets, rings, etc., are to be had in sterling silver gilt at moderate prices.

Above the modish coat collar one sees more often than anything else a lingerie stock high to the tips of the ears at the sides and high at the back, but rounded under the chin.

Very smart is the bolero illustrated to be worn with a princess frock. It is trimmed with braid, and the becoming notched collar is heavily braided in several varieties of braid. The cuffs are treated in the same fashion.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

QUAINT CONCEITS.

A Formula For Cleaning Kid Slippers. Fagoted Bands on Cluny Collars.

To clean light kid slippers put one-half an ounce of hartshorn in a saucer, dip a bit of clean flannel in it and rub

A PINAFORE FROCK.

A pattern of this little pinafore frock may be had in four sizes—from six to twelve years. Send 10 cents to this office, giving number of pattern (3612), and it will be promptly forwarded to you by mail.

on a piece of white soap. As soon as the flannel becomes soiled take a fresh piece.

Fagoted bands are used to outline shaped collars of heavy Irish or cluny lace. One lovely collar in the former lace was fastened with tiny linen buttons and loops and had an inch long strip on the right side through which were slipped dainty jabot ties.

The little pinafore styles are liked for general wear for young girls, and the one illustrated is made with a separate guimpe tucked in yoke outline. The body separates to show the guimpe and has pointed shoulder straps that are quite ornamental. The full skirt is joined to the body and is tucked above the hem. All sorts of washable fabrics as well as any of the seasonable woolens are used for these little models, with silk, lawn or cambric for the guimpe.

JUDIC CHOLLET.

WHO WILL LEAD SKATERS?

With Wood Turned "Pro," Amateurs Strive For Championship Title.

With Morris Wood of Long Branch, N. J., the nation's champion, out of the amateur ranks, the struggle for amateur speed skating honors this winter promises to be the most exciting in several years. For the past four years Wood's speed placed him in a class by himself and detracted much interest from the sport. So superior was Wood that all contests in which he competed were nothing more nor less than a struggle for second honors.

Wood's announcement that hereafter he would skate as a professional has infused new life into the knights of the steel blade. It has acted with them like a tonic given to a thoroughbred before a race and caused them to entertain hopes of winning the championship. For instance, while all the well known New York and Brooklyn skaters have been practicing since the opening of the St. Nicholas rink, it was not until they heard of Wood's retirement that they entered into their work with their mightiest efforts.

Judging from the number of them who strove for second honors without determining which was the fastest among them, any one of a dozen may capture the coveted title this season.

Among those easterners who are considered to have a good chance for the championship title are Edmund Lamy of Saranac Lake, N. Y.; Woodward Sutphen, Herbert Earle, Edward [illegible] and William Haywood, Jr., of the Saratoga Skating club, Brooklyn; Phil Kearney, W. W. Swan, W. Lee, W. Smith and Arthur Sarony of the New York Athletic club; Oliver Wood, C. Williams and H. Williams of the Verona Lake Skating club of New Jersey and Allen Taylor of the Irish-American Athletic club.

All of these displayed much speed and endurance in past years, and to pick the champion from them is a task no three experts will agree on. Each has his admirers, and the admirers of each claim their favorite is the best. Then there are speedy men in Chicago and Boston who must be considered.

Toward the close of last season Lamy showed most speed. On several occasions he compelled the invincible Wood to do his best to win. Through accidents to the latter Lamy twice finished in front in races in which Wood started. In a national championship

EDWARD CRABB, WHO MAY WIN AMATEUR SKATING TITLE.

event at Newburg, N. Y., Wood fell and Lamy continued and beat home the field easily, but when he met the champion in subsequent events the same day he was beaten off. Again, in the last meet of the season at Saratoga rink in Brooklyn, Lamy beat Wood home by a scant yard. The contest, however, was replete with fouling. Rounding the turn everybody fouled every one else so distinctly that all should have been disqualified. The contestants entered protests against one another, with the result that the officials decided to have the event reskated. In the skate off Wood won easily and Lamy finished second.

Among those who skated under the auspices of the Amateur Athletic union Phil Kearney and Allen Taylor displayed most speed and won nearly all the events. There were few fast men opposed to them, however, and their victories were of the hollow style. Before the break with the A. A. U., Kearney and Taylor were no better or no worse than many of their opponents. They often won and were just as often beaten.

Another skater who experts predict will succeed Wood as champion is Woodward Sutphen of the Saratoga Skating club.

He has long been a close friend of Wood's and for several years the two trained together.

Columbia-Harvard Rowing Race.

It is practically certain now that Columbia and Harvard will meet in a rowing regatta on the Charles river, Boston, early in May, as they did last year. Jim Rice, the Columbia coach, tried to arrange a race for the Harlem river, but the Cambridge authorities refused to consider it, and, rather than see the event fall through, Rice consented to row on the Charles.

The Dog Show Season.

The indoor dog show season has arrived. Some homely little mutts won't know themselves when the dyers, joint straighteners, nose improvers and manicures get through with them.

THE THEATER WORLD

"The House of a Thousand Candles" Lacks Merit.

WORK OF E. M. HOLLAND.

Well Known Actor Does Good Work In a Poor Play—Over Six Hundred People on Stage In "The Battle of Port Arthur."

[From Our New York Dramatic Correspondent.]

"The House of a Thousand Candles" has been dramatized and put on at Daly's theater, and it has few points of merit. It is an adaptation of Mr. Nicholson's book that has little or no reason for a stage existence.

Perhaps the play might not have seemed quite so exasperatingly foolish if it had been interpreted by players well trained in the old melodramatic school, which taught how a veil of illusion might be cast about crude and

E. M. HOLLAND.

violent artifice by means of romantic coloring and solemn, artful exaggeration.

There was no suggestion of this art anywhere except in the case of the star, E. M. Holland, an accomplished actor, who enacted the sham butler, who is the center of the crazy complications, with a fine sincerity and variety of artistic resource worthy of a far better cause.

Personally he won a decided success, but it was lamentable to see an actor of his caliber and distinction condemned—by the fatality arising out of a distintegrating and inexorable system—to waste his ability upon such indescribable rubbish. Yet there are almost always compensations for those who know how to look for them, and Mr. Holland furnished one interesting and valuable object lesson by demonstrating the power of the real as compared with the ineffectiveness of the pretended actor.

Beside him his associates, with the single exception of Fred A. Sullivan, appeared as raw amateurs. His neat, rapid, incisive and appropriate byplay, his facial eloquence, his clever suggestion of conflicting perplexities and his vigor in action—his whole artistic execution, in short—were admirable to watch and gave to the show its only attribute of value.

For sensible folk there is precious little entertainment of any kind in "The House of a Thousand Candles," but the dime novel flavor that pervades it seemed to be relished by a considerable part of the audience, and it may prove acceptable to children both of the younger and older growth.

"The Battle of Port Arthur" at the Hippodrome is a wonderful new spectacle. More than 600 people appear on the immense stage during the performance. The 600 are about equally divided between the Russian and the Japanese and are so manipulated on the stage that it doesn't require much imagination to get the effect of two contending armies of many regiments each. One of the extras provided by Owen Davis, the melodrama maker, was the romance of General Nogi's daughter and her rescue from the Russians by her lover in her father's army.

As a preliminary to the fight there is a scene in a square of the besieged city filled with Cossacks, starving people of the town crying for food and Japanese prisoners.

Troops march out to the music of the Russian hymn and the battle is on. There is heavy firing, and the effect of many shells bursting in the air is given electrically.

In the first scene the Japanese swarm up the heights of 203 Meter hill, dragging their Gatlings with them, and defeat the Russians, most of whom jump into the lake.

ROBERT BUTLER.

Sprinters Have About Reached Limit.

Dan Kelly, the sprinter, says that it is unwise to expect any short distance man to run 100 yards in 9 seconds flat, as predicted by Arthur E. Duffey, the former world's champion. The only way the nine seconds mark could be reached would be to beat the gun, says Kelly. "To do the 100 in 9 flat is impossible if the runner tries to run legitimately. The speed limit of human beings will have been reached when some sprinter is developed who can do the distance in 9 2-5 seconds. At a shorter distance some athlete may be able to develop greater speed, but I hardly believe that possible. The men who have established the present records are all good athletes, and they went every inch of the 100 yards at their top speed, and still they were unable to come below 9 3-5 seconds."

DRYING THIN GLASSES.

A Dealer Tells Why the Maid Breaks Them So Often.

"Our maid certainly worked destruction on those sherry glasses, those delicate little glasses," said the customer to the dealer. "There were six, and she broke three inside of three months."

"Oh, you got off easy, judging from the stories that come to us," replied the store man.

"Well, I see how it is," responded the customer. "I tried wiping a few of these glasses myself the other night, and the first thing I knew I wiped the side right out of one. As the maids say, 'Why, they break right in the towel!'"

"Now, if you would wait until they were nearly dry," remarked the dealer, "you'd never break any at all. Take this cordial glass with the very thin stem. You naturally seize it by the foot and turn it while you wipe the bowl with the other hand. While the glass is wet the dish towel, gripped between two fingers, holds the bowl like a vise, and you just naturally twist the stem in two. But if you let the glass get nearly dry the towel slips, and the danger is over."

"Doesn't that make streaked glasses?"

"No, not if the water and towels are clean. Of course you ought to have towels that you use only for glassware. Towels that have been used on dishes are likely to have grease on them, and grease is the great enemy of brilliancy in glassware."

"Then can soap be used in the water?"

"Oh, yes. We use pure white soap with ours. The main point is to have the water hot enough. That helps with the drying, too, because when you take a glass out of very hot water and set it aside to drain it will dry itself before you can take a towel to it. Tissue paper is good as a polisher because usually it has never touched grease. Alcohol has a reputation as a polisher, but its function is rather to clean. Cut up potatoes are good to shine up the insides of pitchers and carafes."—New York Post.

A FAREWELL CHAT.

Interview Between the Boss and the Man He Fired.

Neither of the partners had arrived, and the clerks that morning were indulging in their usual bout of gossip.

"Did I tell you, chaps, that I was leaving?" drawled the languid swell of the staff, whose incompetence was as palpable as the splendor of his attire.

"Heard you'd got the sack," replied the spectacled cashier gruffly.

"I answered an advertisement yesterday for what looks like a first class job," resumed the overdressed one, ignoring the remark. "I've pitched rather a strong yarn, but you've got to do that if you want to keep up with the times."

Just then the senior partner entered, and all wrote intently.

Within five minutes the "old man," who had been opening letters, called the last speaker into his room, and the following dialogue became plainly audible to those outside:

"Have you been in our service seven years?"

"No, sir; only fifteen months."

"And is your salary £4 10s. a week?"

"Eh, no, sir; 30 shillings."

"And are you in entire charge of the counting house?"

No reply.

"And are you leaving us because of a difference with the firm regarding the management of our colonial branches?"

Dead silence and a short pause.

Then the old man:

"You should be more careful in your statements, sir. This is a small world. The advertisement you answered was for the situation you are leaving on Saturday. That will do."—London Tit-Bits.

Americanism In England.

The following speech is put into the mouth of an American heiress in an English story called "A Subaltern of Horse:"

"I've a hunch that this is the biggest game of spoof I've officiated in yet, Mr. Herries. You have a nerve and no mistake." Then as Herries withdrew she caught sight of Fox's smiling face. The Bud turned on him hotly. "You were in this too. I like your neck. You'll have to pitch a tale to pop. He's drawn on a man for less out west. Come, Margi, let's get; we're the lobsters this hike. Captain, will you please escort us to our carriage?"

He Aimed Higher.

He kissed her hand.

She withdrew it hastily and gazed reproachfully at him.

"I didn't think it of you," she said, almost tearfully. "I had always considered you a young man with ideals and"—

"I—I am sorry if I have offended," he stammered. "I"—

"Well," she said bitterly, "I certainly expected you to aim higher."

So he took heart and made new resolutions and things.

A French Bull.

On seeing the gallantry of the Moors the commandant could not help clapping his hands and exclaiming, "Bravo!" as he advanced with his saber in one hand and his revolver in the other. —Cor. Paris Matin.

General Smashup.

Mrs. Benham—It seems as if everything was broken when we moved. Benham—Shouldn't wonder. I know the moving broke me. — New York Press.